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New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 2nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KALPAGE (Sri Lanka)

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* Items considered together.

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AGENDA ITEM 119: OFFERS BY MEMBER STATES OF STUDY AND TRAINING FACILITIES FOR INHABITANTS OF NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES*

REQUESTS FOR HEARINGS

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

EARTHQUAKE IN INDIA

1. The CHAIRMAN, on behalf of the members of the Committee, extended deepest sympathy to the Government and people of India for the tragic loss of lives and extensive material damage resulting from the recent earthquake in India. He also hoped that the international community would show its solidarity with India and respond promptly and generously to requests for help.

2. Mr. ALSAIDI (Yemen), Mr. MWANBULUKUTU (United Republic of Tanzania) and Mr. AL-BAKER (Qatar) also offered condolences to the people and Government of India.

3. Mr. GOEL (India) expressed appreciation for the sympathy extended by the previous speakers.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

4. The CHAIRMAN said that the meeting was a historic one because it was the inaugural meeting of the new Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee). It was also the first practical manifestation of the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly, pursuant to resolution 47/233, in accordance with which the number of Main Committees had been reduced to six with the merger of the former Special Political Committee and the former Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee). The new Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) had been placed second in the list of six Main Committees. The Assembly had also decided that the agenda items previously allocated to the former Special Political Committee and the former Fourth Committee should be allocated to the new Committee.

5. The merger of the two former Committees indicated the hope that the process of decolonization dealt with by the Fourth Committee would soon be completed. However, there were still 18 Non-Self-Governing Territories with which the Committee was concerned. The Assembly, in resolution 43/47, had declared the period 1990-2000 as the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, and resolution 44/100 had put forward a programme of activities in observance of the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. He was convinced that by the end of the century, the work in connection with decolonization would be decisively concluded.

6. 1993 had seen momentous developments with respect to the struggle of the Palestinian people for the achievement of their inalienable rights. The Declaration of Principles of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the Government of Israel marked the beginning of a new phase in the peace process, which would affect not merely the Palestinian people but the entire Middle East. That would obviously have an impact on agenda items 85 and 86.

7. Sri Lanka had since 1968 chaired the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other

(The Chairman)

Arabs of the Occupied Territories and he had himself been personally associated with the issue over the past two and a half years. While the report that would be presented to the Committee under agenda item 86 covered developments in the occupied territories up to 27 August 1993, the resolutions adopted in the Committee under that item would have to take account of the more recent developments that offered hope for lasting peace in the Middle East. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) could benefit from recent initiatives like the meeting in Washington to mobilize international support for reconstruction and development activities in the Middle East, which had to be taken into account also in considering agenda item 85.

8. Agenda item 88 on information was significant because the dissemination of information touched on many vital United Nations activities with which the Committee dealt.

9. The United Nations peace-keeping operations, which had gathered momentum, at the same time entailed complex new challenges. The Committee would no doubt give attention to the series of recommendations made by the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations at its latest session. The Committee had the major responsibility of comprehensively reviewing the whole question of peace-keeping operations in all their aspects, particularly important because the issue was highlighted daily in the mass media.

10. Agenda item 84 on the peaceful uses of outer space was of considerable importance, given the common interest of humankind in promoting the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes and for the preservation of the Earth's environment. The time had come to give a new impetus to international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space, particularly in view of the recent policy changes announced by the leading nations with space capability.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

11. Mr. ALSAIDI (Yemen) nominated Mr. Chirila (Romania) for one of the offices of Vice-Chairman.

12. Mr. MWANBULUKUTU (United Republic of Tanzania) seconded the nomination.

13. Mr. Chirila (Romania) was elected Vice-Chairman.

14. The CHAIRMAN said that consultations would continue on the nominations for the second office of Vice-Chairman and that he would report on them subsequently to the Committee.

15. Mr. AL-BAKER (Qatar) nominated Mr. Chinvanno (Thailand) for the office of Rapporteur.

16. Mr. Chinvanno (Thailand) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.

17. Mr. Chinvanno (Rapporteur) took a place at the Committee table.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK (A/C.4/48/1, A/C.4/48/L.1, A/INF/48/1)

18. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to document A/C.4/48/1, containing the list of agenda items allocated to the Committee, and to document A/C.4/48/L.1 on the organization of the Committee's work. He also drew attention to the recommendations concerning the organization and rationalization of the work and practices of the General Assembly contained in document A/48/250. Those recommendations included provisions on the number of meetings to be held at Headquarters, which would be limited to those that could be serviced within the regular manning table, on the opening and closing dates of the General Assembly session and the work of the Main Committees, and on the schedule of meetings. Regarding explanations of vote, rights of reply, points of order and the length of statements, he reminded delegations of the provisions of General Assembly decision 34/401, paragraphs 6, 7 and 8, which were also set out in document A/48/250. He also pointed out that paragraphs 17 to 30 of document A/48/250 contained comments on summary records, the number of resolutions, and various questions relating to the programme budget like the submission of estimates of expenditures, which were contained in rule 153 of the rules of procedure and in paragraphs 12 and 13 of General Assembly decision 34/401, as well as the deadlines for submitting draft resolutions with financial implications, above all those involving changes in the programme of work and additional expenditures.

19. The names of members of delegations should be submitted to the Secretariat on the form reproduced in document A/INF/48/5, so that a list of the members of the Committee could be issued. In addition, he drew the members' attention to a decision taken by the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session on the basis of a suggestion by the Director-General of the World Health Organization, to prohibit smoking in small conference rooms like rooms 5 to 10 and A to E, and to discourage smoking in large conference rooms like rooms 1 to 4.

20. At the current meeting, the Committee would begin to consider agenda items 18, 116, 117, 118, 12 and 119 on decolonization, the related reports having already been issued.

21. With regard to agenda item 83 on effects of atomic radiation, the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation was scheduled to appear that same day in document A/48/46. A draft resolution on the item had been prepared and those interested should consult with the Canadian delegation.

22. With reference to agenda item 88 on questions relating to information, the report of the Committee on Information had been issued under symbol A/48/21 and the Secretary-General's report in accordance with resolution 47/73 B would be contained in document A/48/407.

23. Regarding agenda item 85 (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East), the Commissioner-General's report would be issued as documents A/48/13 and A/48/13/Add.1. The Secretary-General's reports in accordance with resolution 47/69 would be issued in mid-October.

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24. With regard to agenda item 84 (International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space), the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had been issued in document A/48/20. The Secretary-General's report would be issued as document A/48/365.

25. With reference to agenda item 86 (Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories), the periodic reports of the Committee in accordance with resolution 47/70 had been issued as documents A/48/96 and A/48/278. It was hoped that the rest of the periodic reports of the Committee in accordance with resolution 47/70 would be issued before the Fourth Committee's consideration of the item.

26. Regarding agenda item 87 (Comprehensive review of the whole question of peace-keeping operations in all their aspects), the report of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations had been issued as document A/48/173. One of the related reports of the Secretary-General had been issued as document A/48/349-S/26358 and the other would soon be issued under symbol A/48/403-S/26450 and Add.1.

27. Regarding agenda item 89 (Science and peace), he did not expect any basic documentation for the consideration of the item.

28. Finally, in relation to agenda item 90 (Question of the composition of the relevant organs of the United Nations), he did not expect any basic documentation for the consideration of the item.

29. The timetable proposed in document A/C.4/48/L.1 had taken account of the availability of the documentation which he had just outlined, the consultations held with substantive units and the number of meetings devoted to those matters at previous sessions.

30. There had been a request to change the order of consideration of the items. It had been proposed that the consideration of item 85, scheduled for 1 November, should be deferred until 22 November so that more consultations could be held regarding the item. Should agreement be reached regarding that change, item 87 would be considered in the week beginning 1 November.

31. Finally, he asked whether any member of the Committee wished to comment on the draft programme of work.

32. Mr. VACHON (Canada) said that, since it was necessary to plan both the draft programme of work of the Committee as well as the work of the representatives, he wished for more time to hold consultations as to whether it was possible to accede to the request regarding the change in the order of consideration of items 85 and 87.

33. Mr. MACEDO (Mexico) supported the position of the Canadian representative and said that his delegation for practical reasons wished to defer the decision regarding changes in the order of consideration of the items. It was his country's opinion that, given a little more time, a solution could be worked out which would be satisfactory to all concerned.

34. Mr. COOLS (Belgium) said that he fully understood the technical reasons why the two previous speakers had requested a little more time. The European Community and its member States agreed with the change proposed by the Chairman, since more time would be necessary for the holding of consultations on item 85.

35. The CHAIRMAN asked the Secretariat to take note of the comments of the representatives of Canada, Mexico and Belgium and said that, once the relevant consultations had been held, a decision would be reached by Friday, when the next meeting would be held.

36. It was his understanding that the Committee wished to adopt the programme of work in document A/C.4/48/L.1, which would be modified taking into account the suggestions put forward in relation to agenda item 85.

37. It was so decided.

38. The CHAIRMAN said that agenda item 38 as a whole would be considered by the General Assembly in plenary meeting. The Committee would hear organizations and individuals with a special interest in the item. Depending on the number of requests, the Committee would devote certain meetings to those hearings and would endeavour to hold as many hearings as might be needed. In that connection, organizations or individuals interested in making statements in the course of those hearings should present a written request to him by 25 October at the latest. Such requests would be circulated as documents of the Committee, which would consider them at a meeting prior to the hearing. The Secretariat would inform those individuals and organizations whose requests for a hearing had been approved by the Committee of the date of the hearing.

39. It was his understanding that the Committee was in agreement with that procedure.

40. It was so decided.

41. The CHAIRMAN said that the organizations and individuals who had sought a hearing on item 46 would be able to make their statements to the Committee when the item was considered in plenary meeting.

42. As in previous years, the Committee would establish an open-ended working group, chaired by the delegation of Austria, to draw up the draft resolution on agenda item 84. In order to facilitate the task, he suggested that the Committee should set up such a group as soon as possible.

43. It was so decided.

44. The CHAIRMAN said that, in adopting the proposed plan of work, the Committee had decided to hold a general debate on items 18, 116, 117, 118 and 12 and 119 of the agenda, which would permit its members to deal with the items together or singly at any one of the meetings assigned to that group of items.

45. Basing itself on the recommendation of the Special Committee of 24, it had been the custom of the former Fourth Committee to consider the chapter of the

(The Chairman)

report of that Committee which dealt with military activities in Non-Self-Governing Territories together with the item relating to foreign economic interests.

46. It was his understanding that the Committee wished to maintain the same procedure.

47. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 18: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (Territories not covered by other items of the agenda) (A/48/23 (Part II, chaps. III and IV, Part IV, chap. VII, Parts V to VIII, chaps. IX to XII), A/48/95, A/48/224 and Add.1 and 2, A/48/357)

AGENDA ITEM 116: INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES TRANSMITTED UNDER ARTICLE 73 e OF THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS (A/48/23 (Part III, chaps. V and VI), A/48/130, A/48/175)

AGENDA ITEM 117: ACTIVITIES OF THOSE FOREIGN ECONOMIC AND OTHER INTERESTS WHICH IMPEDE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES IN TERRITORIES UNDER COLONIAL DOMINATION AND EFFORTS TO ELIMINATE COLONIALISM, APARTHEID AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA (A/48/23 (Part III, chaps. V and VI))

AGENDA ITEM 118: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES BY THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE UNITED NATIONS

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM 119: OFFERS BY MEMBER STATES OF STUDY AND TRAINING FACILITIES FOR INHABITANTS OF NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES

48. Mr. AL-ATTAR (Syrian Arab Republic), Rapporteur of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, introduced the chapters of the Special Committee's report which referred to items 18, 116, 117 and 118 of the agenda and which were contained in document A/48/23 (Parts II to VII).

49. In response to the request in General Assembly resolution 47/23, paragraph 12, the Special Committee had once again given extensive consideration to the situation prevailing in the Non-Self-Governing Territories and to the other related questions, and had adopted a series of recommendations and proposals thereon.

50. The Special Committee had reiterated that it was the responsibility of the administering Powers to create such conditions in those Territories as would enable their people to exercise freely and without interference their inalienable right to self-determination and independence in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). It also reiterated that it was for the

(Mr. Al-Attar, Syrian Arab Republic)

people of those Territories to determine freely their future political status in accordance with the relevant provisions of the United Nations Charter and the Declaration. It called on the administering Powers, in cooperation with the territorial Governments, to facilitate programmes of political education in order to foster an awareness among the people of the possibilities open to them in the exercise of their right to self-determination in conformity with the legitimate political status options clearly defined by General Assembly resolution 1541 (XV).

51. In reaffirming the responsibility of the administering Powers to promote the economic and social development and to preserve the cultural identity of the Territories, the Special Committee had recommended that priority should continue to be given to the strengthening and diversification of their economies.

52. Mindful that the visiting missions provided a means of ascertaining the situation in the small Territories, the Special Committee had stressed the need to dispatch periodic visiting missions in order to facilitate the full and effective implementation of the Declaration with respect to those Territories and had called upon the administering Powers to cooperate with the United Nations by receiving visiting missions to the Territories under their administration.

53. The Special Committee had also taken note with appreciation of the invitation extended to it by the Government of New Zealand to send a visiting mission to Tokelau in 1994.

54. With regard to the question of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, and as indicated in document A/48/23 (Part VI), chapter X, paragraph 26, the Special Committee had decided to defer consideration of the question to its 1994 session.

55. He stated that France, the United Kingdom and the United States, as administering Powers, had not participated in the Committee's proceedings in respect of the Territories under their administration during the current year. The Committee hoped that the three Governments would reconsider their position in that regard.

56. With respect to information transmitted by the administering Powers to the Secretary-General under Article 73 e of the Charter, the Special Committee had stressed the importance of timely transmissions by the administering Powers of adequate information, in particular in relation to the preparation by the Secretariat of working papers on the Territories concerned, and had requested the administering Powers to transmit or continue to transmit to the Secretary-General the information prescribed in Article 73 e of the Charter, as well as the fullest possible information on political and constitutional developments in the Territories concerned, within a maximum period of six months following the expiration of the administrative year in those Territories. The Special Committee had accordingly requested the Secretary-General to continue to ensure that the relevant information was drawn from all available published sources in connection with the preparation of such working papers.

(Mr. Al-Attar, Syrian Arab Republic)

57. He pointed out that the chapters of the Special Committee's report covering its work during 1993 concerning agenda items 117 and 118 were contained in documents A/48/23 (Part III), chapters V and VI, and A/48/23 (Part IV), chapter VII, respectively.

58. In accordance with established practice and pursuant to General Assembly decision 47/409, paragraph 14, of 16 November 1992, the Special Committee had considered the question relating to military activities and arrangements by colonial Powers in Territories under their administration.

59. He recalled that the Special Committee had considered those items in July and August 1993 and had adopted the relevant decisions. On the basis of those decisions it had formulated the recommendations to the General Assembly which were contained in the chapters mentioned above.

60. In that connection, he informed members that in view of the recent developments in South Africa the members of the Special Committee were consulting and reconsidering those decisions with a view to making appropriate amendments to them before presenting its recommendations to the General Assembly. He hoped to report on the outcome of those consultations to the Committee as soon as possible.

61. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should take note of the Special Committee's recommendation relating to the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, contained in document A/48/23 (Part VI), chapter X, paragraph 26.

62. It was so decided.

63. The CHAIRMAN added that in adopting the organization of work the Committee had decided that the list of speakers in the general debate covering those items should be closed on 6 October at 6 p.m. Any changes in the order of inscription could be made only by mutual consent between two delegations that agreed to exchange places on the list.

64. He pointed out that only a limited number of meetings had been assigned to the Committee, which had to make the most efficient use of the time allocated, as indicated in the timetable given in document A/C.4/48/L.1.

65. Finally, he said that at the next meeting, scheduled for 8 October at 10 a.m., the Committee would continue with the general debate on items 18, 116, 117, 118 and 12 and 119. At the meeting of 12 October there would be statements by representatives of the Non-Self-Governing Territories of Guam and Gibraltar and some petitioners would be heard.

REQUESTS FOR HEARINGS

66. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee that he had received nine additional communications containing requests for hearings on agenda items 18, 116, 117 and 118. He suggested that, in accordance with the usual practice, the communications should be circulated as Committee documents for consideration at a subsequent meeting.

67. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.